



## DMI Leadership Report – November 2021

From Jason Ilstrup, DMI President

### **Creating Connections and Community:**

- DMI released the 2021 State of the Downtown Report this month. As part of the release, we hosted a hybrid (the Overture Center and Zoom) panel discussion on downtown now and into the future with Brenda González, Ellie Westman Chin, Matt Mikolajewski, Philip Gritzmacher and Craig Stanley.
- DMI hired Heather Stetzer as our new Director of Development. Heather started on November 1 and is hitting the ground running. Please help me welcome Heather by connecting with her when you get the chance. Please also help me say thank you to Carol Ann Hewitt for all her amazing work building DMI into what it is today. Carol Ann's passion, hospitality, hard work and huge heart helped ensure DMI can connect our members and advocate for a strong downtown.
- DMI continues working on its new strategic plan. Our partners, MIG, were in town in November meeting with our stakeholder group, discussing the organization with key downtown leaders and touring the area.
- This month's New Faces New Places was hosted on the beautiful outdoor patio at the new Hilton Garden Inn on Regent Street. DMI also welcomed Lexi London, the Executive Director of the Bayview Foundation to a hybrid What's Up Downtown Breakfast to discuss their new project in the Triangle.
- I attended the International Downtown Association Annual Conference in Tampa. I participated in several sessions on homelessness, public art, and economic development. I also presented to the conference on downtown advocacy.

### **Economic Development:**

- In September, DMI partnered with the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) on a fall mixer event at ULI's US Bank Building. The event featured opportunities for people to connect and hear about the great work of NOMA's Wisconsin chapter.
- The Regent Street Revitalization Group, hosted by DMI, met for the first time since the pandemic. The Group heard presentations from Vandewalle on their Regent Street opportunity analysis (created by the Group a few years ago), the City on their plan for the newly created TID 48 and from several developers/project leaders with updates on their activities.
- The Economic Development Committee also discussed Regent Street and its future at their meeting. I presented Vandewalle's plan and discussed all the development happening in the area.

### **Challenge Committee:**

- The Challenge Committee continues their work on several projects including identifying ideas from the Facing Bias workshop session to move forward into the strategic planning work, identifying what the Committee's challenges are the strategic planning, and helping DMI close the gaps in our network to ensure all voices are part of the strategic plan.

#### **Membership Development:**

- The Membership Development Committee met to discuss recent new membership and to recap the 2021 Annual Celebration.
- The Committee also hosted their quarterly New Member Coffee. Several new members learned more about the organization, met other members/Board members, and connected through several breakout sessions.
- The new members joining DMI this month include: Forward Community Investments, Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras, Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, Northwestern Mutual Life of Southern Wisconsin, High Speed Rail Alliance, Nehemiah Community Development Corporation, Forward Theater and Judy Krofsky. Welcome everyone!

#### **Transportation:**

- The Transportation Committee met to hear partner updates and discuss strategies on moving forward on several recent presentations, including from People for Bikes.
- As part of DMI's approved position on BRT and State Street, we are supporting Amendment 15 to the City's Capital Budget. The amendment requires BRT funds shall not be expended without City Council approval on BRT routes and modifications to non-BRT routes.

#### **Quality of Life:**

- The Downtown Safety Initiative (also known as the Community Based Crime Reduction project) hosted their first advisory council meeting. The UW Population Health Institute lead the meeting of diverse stakeholders to discuss safety downtown and how we're going to create a multi-disciplinary, community lead, initiative to ensure downtown is safe for everyone. This project is part of a three-year Federal grant; the Council will help create the plan for the next two years.
- The Quality of Life Committee met to hear update from their sub-committees and partners. The Committee also discussed the work of the Downtown Safety Initiative.

#### **Inclusiveness:**

- The DMI Inclusiveness Committee Book Club continues to meet with strong participation from several member organizations.
- The Inclusiveness Committee met to hear a presentation from Maggie Pascaly on American Family's Dream Foundation and their diversity, equity, and inclusion work.
- The Committee is co-hosting an event with the Out Professional Engagement Network (OPEN) on making Madison the most livable city for everyone. The live event will include a panel discussion and breakout sessions.

#### **Government Relations:**

- The Government Relations Committee held a joint committee meeting with Economic Development and hosted Jason Stein from the Wisconsin Policy Forum to discuss their recent report on the Mayor's 2022 City of Madison budget.

For questions and more information, contact Jason Ilstrup, DMI President at 608-512-1330 or [jilstrup@downtownmadison.org](mailto:jilstrup@downtownmadison.org).